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New Crossing Guards in Marin will Help Make Walking and Biking to School Safer, Easier

The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) announced today that a half-million dollar Crossing Guard Program is being implemented in Marin County for the 2006-07 school year, starting this week. The program will provide trained crossing guards for Marin schools at more than 50 locations throughout the county. The program aims to ease morning congestion by providing school crossing guards that will better enable walking and biking trips to schools, thereby lessening the need for parents to drive their children to school.

The Crossing Guard Program is the first such program in the Bay Area that is funded by monies earmarked for transportation projects. The funding for the crossing guards comes from Measure A, Marin's half-cent sales tax dedicated to improving transportation in Marin.

"The use of Measure A funds for the Crossing Guards Program will help to ensure that (crossing) guards are consistently available at the busiest intersections," said Dianne Steinhauser, Executive Director of the Transportation Authority of Marin. "Schools have understood the need for crossing guards and have supplied them in many locations. This program supports and enhances the schools' efforts."

Last year, Marin's schools were requested to identify the intersections near schools where crossing guards were currently in place or were needed. The Marin Public Works Association and the TAM Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) evaluated and prioritized requested crossing guard locations and the TAM Board approved 54 locations to be funded by the TAM program. All City Management Services, Inc., a professional company that specializes in crossing guard services, will manage and implement the Crossing Guard Program. The crossing guard staff will be required to successfully complete a Department of Justice criminal background check and the contractor's training program.

The Crossing Guard Program is one of three programs funded by Measure A that are designed to get more school children walking and bicycling to school. The Safe Routes to Schools program provides education to children about alternative routes to school while also removing barriers to those alternatives. The Safe Pathways to Schools program provides funding for the engineering, environmental clearance, and construction of pathway and sidewalk improvements in all Marin County communities, including safety improvements at street crossings.